

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in conjunction with a Request for Continued Examination. The claims of the application were finally rejected in the Office Action mailed February 24, 2004.

Status of the claims

Originally-filed claims 1-13 have been cancelled. New claims 14-20 are submitted for examination. No new matter is added by these amendments. Support for new claims 14-20 may be found, for example, at page 36, line 21 – page 44, line 21, and in FIGS. 12 and 13.

Related Application

Subsequent to the filing of the present application, U.S. application serial number 09/915,801 was filed on July 26, 2001. That related application disclosed substantially the same subject matter as the present application. Also, that related application included claims 1-13 substantially matching claims 1-13 of the present application as originally filed, and claims 14-17 directed to additionally disclosed subject matter. In the related application, claims 1-13 have now been cancelled and only claims 14-17 remain and are allowed. A Petition For An Unintentionally Delayed Claim For Priority Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.78 has been filed in connection with the related application serial number 09/915,801 requesting addition of a claim to priority to the present U.S. application number 09/872,737. During prosecution of serial number 09/915,801, the following references were cited against claims of the application: U.S. patent number 6,078,866 to Buck and U.S. patent number 6,377,961 to Ryu. Buck has been previously cited in the present application. An Information Disclosure Statement is being filed on even date herewith disclosing several references, including Ryu.

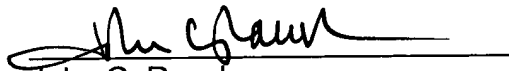
After review of the two applications and discovery of the overlapping claims, Applicant has sought to completely disclose to the examiner the circumstances of the

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present application, the related application serial number 09/915,801 and the overlapping claims. Applicant invites the examiner to telephone the undersigned attorney for any additional information which may be useful to the Office in evaluating patentability of this application or application serial number 09/915,801, or to require a written submission pertaining to these subjects.

With this response, the application is believed to be in condition for further examination on the merits. Should the examiner deem a telephone conference to be of assistance in advancing the application to allowance, the examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John G. Rauch", is written over a horizontal line.

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July 26, 2004
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